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Capital campaign magic

Have you noticed big capital campaigns in your community that raise millions? From the outside, it looks effortless. Like magic. They announce the goal and Presto! They're celebrating success.

How does it all happen? How can you pull off big-time results like these for your smaller organization? Andrea Kihlstedt and Gail Perry share techniques in "Capital Campaign Magic: Revealing Five Secrets of Success."

By following these five secrets of success, and you'll find those larger gifts start coming your way. And even if you're not in a campaign, you can use these five key strategies now, in your everyday fundraising this fall, to bring in the big gifts.

1. Focus on the right few.
2. Tie your campaign to community benefits.
3. Get everyone pulling in the same direction.
4. Train people to ask.
5. Set a dollar goal and put it up against a deadline.

Kihlstedt and Perry have joined forces in a new blog site, capitalcampaignmagic.com

— from GuideStar
(www.guidestar.org),
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NEW FOR NONPROFITS

The missing ingredient in major gifts effort

By Gail Perry
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the FiredUp Fundraising Blog,
www.gailperry.com

Do you ever feel like you are stuck in the office? The problem is – you're not going to raise any money there.

You've got to get out in front of donors.

Many of my colleagues complain that they just aren't out making the calls on donors they need to make.

They know it's the missing ingredient in implementing their fundraising plan.

The no. 1 secret of raising lots of money? Face time with donors

The problem (or opportunity) is that there's no substitute for face-to-face customer/donor contact.

How else can you forge a deep relationship? How else can you use your radar to learn more about the donor's interests and inclinations?

And if you consider the lifetime value of a major donor to your organization, it might be easier to justify getting out there and visiting with them.

Why is it so hard to be out of the office?

Immediate priorities keep pulling at you. And they take you pretty much nowhere.

Yes, you're working on your direct-mail program, writing thank-you letters, solving problems, setting up your next event, even reading this blog – but none of this will raise the really big money you need.

As Ayda Sanver, the very smart executive director of the CSAAC Foundation in Maryland told me recently, "You can't raise money in your office!"

She's out there all the time visiting with potential and current donors. Yes!

The Data: It really DOES pay to schmooze

The Neuromarketing blog recently ran an article titled "It Really Does Pay to Schmooze."

They cited an experiment that tested the difference between establishing a personal connection and not establishing it. They found that when students socialized before doing business, the odds were far greater that they would strike a successful "win-win" deal.

They concluded: "Good, old-fashioned face time can have a significant impact on trust and behavior."

So what's your plan for getting out of the office? Here's your plan:

1. Set a goal for each month. Set the number of visits you plan to make each month. Is it 8, 12, 20? (If you are not a CEO, then you should make a minimum of 12, I think.)

You will never get anywhere without this goal.

2. Enlist internal support. Tell all your co-workers about your goal and ask them to push you out of the office. You've got to have internal support.

Sometimes non-fundraising staff will raise their eyebrows about our need to get out of the office. I used to sense subtle disapproval from some co-workers when I was a staffer.

So be sure everyone knows what your job is and why it's important to be out there.

3. Make it a big deal. Talk about your

visits, and your goal. Get your CEO behind you. Get your board behind you.

Tell everybody that you need to make a certain number of visits each month. Ask for their help.

Who needs a face-to-face meeting? What wonderful donor needs to be thanked in person? Who has tons of potential and needs more cultivation? (If she's smart, your boss will make this a management tool, and will ask to see monthly reports on your progress against goals.)

4. Just do it. Draw a line in the sand and make a personal commitment.

I send out my Friday newsletter come hell or high water (or hurricanes!) – I just do it.

No matter what's going on in my life or business, this newsletter comes out. And it has made all the difference in the world – to my thinking, to my marketing, to my professional development.

So just think what you could accomplish if you had a lot of major prospects under cultivation. How much more money could you raise?

Bottom line: Here's your motto: "If it's to be, it's up to me."

You can do it! Just make the commitment.

This article is reprinted from the FiredUp Fundraising Blog by Gail Perry, MBA, CFRE. Perry is a consultant, coach and popular speaker who works with organizations nationwide to fire up their fundraising and their board. You can access many free fundraising resources on her site (www.gailperry.com) and stay up to date by joining her Firedup Fundraising Insiders. You can reach her at gp@gailperry.com.

Stop pitching, start listening How to find out what donors care about

Reprinted with permission from
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Let's face it: Some ways of interacting with prospective donors work better than others.

Board members already understand that talking too much about themselves when cultivating prospects is a no-no. But it's even tougher to wean members of talking about the organization's needs.

After all, isn't that what it's all about – the nonprofit's needs? Not exactly.

New mindset

These days, donors (individual, foundation and corporate) are more interested in an organization's social impact, argues Jason Saul in his new book, *The End of Fundraising*.

What's that mean to you?

It means that although an emotional pitch to a potential donor will never go out of style, these days your prospective donors are more likely to respond to an outcome-based solicitation aimed at their own specific needs, wants and desires.

Here are five ways to tweak your pitch so it resonates with today's donors:

1. Get to know the prospective donor. What are your donors' finances, their pain, the social outcomes they value – and how important is it for them to achieve those outcomes?

2. Identify and believe in your organization's value. What's its value proposition? Once the board has identified that, it's easier to go seeking investments (rather than hand-outs) from donors.

3. "Sell painkillers, not vitamins." When cultivating donors, board members should focus on strong and immediate impact – nothing too vague or with too far a time horizon.

4. Sell outcomes, not programs. When cultivating prospective donors, board members should talk about what their group achieves – and avoid the urge to list the specifics of various programs.

It's true prospects still care, for instance, about how many meals a nonprofit serves to homeless people every day.

But they care more about outcomes. For instance, board members can talk about how many fewer children go to bed hungry every night, or how many families have moved out of homelessness as a result of the organization's meal program.

5. Avoid focusing on the organization needs. The best way to talk about donors' contributions to the organization is to consider how to solve a donor's problem or assuage his or her pain. That's more effective than focusing on what the organization "deserves."

Don't forget the mission

Addressing the social outcomes associated with your group's programs doesn't mean its mission falls by the way side.

On the contrary, the important thing is to connect your social outcomes to the value others place on them.

To read more about this approach to donor communications, consult *The End of Fundraising*, by Jason Saul, published by Jossey-Bass, josseybass.com. For more information on the Nonprofit Board Report, call 800-220-5000 or visit www.pbpinfo.

Artful woodpile



Gary Tallman, an artist from Monarch, takes an inventive approach to building a woodpile. Last year's effort was featured in *Rural Montana* magazine (February 2012); the photo above shows this year's pile. Tallman is the author of a self-published book of poetry, *Montana Paths*, covered in the About Books section of *State of the Arts*.